



CDC's Autism Research Efforts

CDC studies on autism

CDC is currently conducting studies to further our understanding of the prevalence and management of autism. The following are examples of ongoing research studies.

Monitoring of Autism Prevalence

In 1998, autism was incorporated into the Atlanta-based developmental disabilities surveillance program. This is the first ongoing surveillance program for autism in the United States which will help CDC monitor changes in the rate of the disorder over time.

Autism Monitoring and Intervention Project, West Virginia

In collaboration with the Marshall University Autism Training Center, the CDC is working to develop an autism surveillance program in several counties in West Virginia. In addition, CDC has awarded funds to Marshall University for development and implementation of an intervention project designed to reduce stress and secondary conditions in children who have autism and their families.

Immunizations and Autism

The National Immunization Program (NIP) and the Developmental Disabilities Branch of the National Center for Environmental Health of the CDC are conducting a study to examine whether the timing of vaccines administered before age 2 years differs in children with autism as compared with children without the disease.

Immunizations and Possible Developmental Regression

CDC is working with the National Institutes of Health to conduct a study that will evaluate whether vaccination is linked with developmental regression, which occurs in a subset of children with autism.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease and MMR Vaccination

CDC is using the Vaccine Safety Datalink in collaboration with several HMOs to study inflammatory bowel disease and MMR vaccination. Results of this study indicate no association between MMR vaccine and Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

Thimerosal and Risk of Autism

The National Immunization Program of the CDC is analyzing data from the Vaccine Safety Datalink Project to evaluate possible associations between exposure to mercury in vaccines (thimerosal) **and risk of autism. Preliminary results are not showing any association between thimerosal and autism.**